

regular form, and recommend that same be approved.

Audit No. 5.

We have examined the report of Receipts and Disbursements of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions for the year ending March 31, 1916, made by Edwin F. Willis, Treasurer of said Committee. We find that the accounts of said Treasurer have been audited by Allen B. Fisher, Certified Public Accountant of Tennessee, whose certificate is attached. We find the report and certificate to be in regular form, and recommend that same be approved; and that the Treasurer be instructed to forward the original certified report to the Stated Clerk.

Audit No. 6.

No report of the Treasurer of the Presbyterian Ministers' Fund for Life Insurance came into our hands.

Recommendations.

No. 1. We find some confusion existing as to whether or not the expenses of Chairman of Ad Interim Committee in attending Assembly shall be paid. We recommend that hereafter the order of Assembly appointing such committees shall direct that the report of its finding shall be made to the Assembly Stated Clerk before the convening of the next Assembly, and the expenses of the chairman of such committees in attending Assembly be not allowed, unless the matter in hand is of such importance that the moderator request such chairman to attend, and make the report on the floor of the Assembly.

We recommend that the expenses of Rev. J. F. Cannon, D. D., Chairman of the Ad Interim Committee on Woman's Position in the Church, and Rev. Robert H. Fleming, D. D., Chairman of Ad Interim Committee on Joint Educational Secretary, in attending present Assembly, be allowed.

No. 2. We further recommend that the Assembly's Treasurer be directed to pay the following assessments which we find to be the correct apportionment due by the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to the support of such institutions:

To the Council of Reformed Churches of America, \$75.00.

To the Council of Reformed Churches of the World, \$420.00.

To the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, \$301.00.

No. 3. We find that the unprecedented expenses for mileage of two preceding meetings of our General Assembly have left our treasury depleted. The expenses of ad interim committees have been unusually large. Our treasurer, in order to discharge these obligations, has been compelled to borrow the money. We are unwilling for these conditions to continue, therefore we consider it unwise to suggest any reduction in our assessment rate, but recommend that it remain at five cents.

We further recommend that the assessment of Presbyteries for the next year be five cents for each communicant reported this year.

We further recommend that the treasurer be authorized to borrow funds to meet any deficit so that current expenses may be paid until this assessment can be collected.

We further find that East Mississippi Presbytery and Wilmington Presbytery have not fully paid last year's assessment, and that several Presbyteries have not yet sent in this year's assessment, we trust that Presbyteries hereafter will be prompt in their remittances.

No. 4. For the future guidance of our treasurer, and in order to avoid confusion, we recommend that the order of Assembly appointing ad interim committees shall direct "that said committee report its acts to the next General Assembly" and that all reports be made in writing and filed with the stated clerk at least two weeks before the convening of the Assembly, and that the stated clerk be required to print the same for the use of the Assembly.

No. 5. We recommend that the accounts of Rev. Russell Cecil, D. D., for \$29.21, and Rev. William Marquis, D. D., for \$22.00, for expenses in attending meetings of councils as delegates from Assembly be allowed.

No. 6. We recommend that the Texas-Mexican Presbytery be assessed thirty dollars for the succeeding year, which shall be in lieu of the assessment of five cents on each communicant.

Respectfully submitted,

W. T. Fowler, Chairman,
W. T. Fowler,
C. H. Hutton,
E. C. Word,
H. J. Spencer,
O. L. Clockier,

W. W. Shaw,
E. W. Comfort,
Committee.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Report of Standing Committee on Foreign Missions was adopted, and is as follows:

Your committee has examined with care the records of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions for the year ending March 31, 1916, and the printed report of the Executive Committee entitled "Southern Presbyterian Missions Abroad."

Concerning the records we report that we find that they have been kept with commendable neatness, fulness and care, and would recommend that they be approved, and that the sound judgment, thoroughness and good business principles of the secretaries, committees and officers displayed in these records be most heartily commended. In this connection your committee would report that we have given especial attention to the matter of administration expense as indicated in the printed report and in the records of the committee, and the report of the treasurer, and have noted with satisfaction the care and economy constantly practiced in this matter as indicated in the records referred to. Your committee ventures to express the opinion that the percentage of the total funds handled which is expended for operating expenses, being only 6.7 per cent., is wisely expended, and that the rate is perhaps lower than that of many of our larger denominations.

Concerning the printed report your committee is of the opinion that is the best that has ever been issued by our Church. It is gotten up in attractive form with twenty-one illustrations, seven maps, and an excellent index. It should be widely circulated throughout the Church as a dependable source of information concerning our work abroad.

As an abstract of this report will be printed in the Appendix to the Minutes of the Assembly, your committee has not thought it necessary to give it extended consideration in this report. There are some things, however, that ought to be briefly mentioned:

(1) We should record our sincere thanks to the great Head of the Church for his manifest blessing upon our work abroad during a year when unprecedented world conditions presented many and grave difficulties.

The report shows the largest number of accessions to our Church upon profession of faith on the foreign field, of any year in our history except last year (1914-1915), and the slight decrease as compared with last year is evidently to be attributed to the depletions of our missionary forces in our most fruitful field, Africa.

There is a tone of encouraging hopefulness in the reports from all the fields which should gladden the hearts of our people and inspire them to ever larger endeavors for the accomplishment of her divinely appointed task.

Your committee notes that in Africa the work is growing in size and strength, and that improvement in sanitation and in the development of the spirit of self-support in the native Church is encouraging. In this field the Industrial and Experimental farm is giving promise of great usefulness. In all the other fields where our Church is laboring there are difficulties and opportunities that our courageous and devoted missionaries are laboring to meet, and the blessing of God seems to be attending their labors.

(2) The Executive Committee, by vigorous efforts carried forward in the spirit of prayer throughout the year has succeeded in closing the year with all the obligations incurred in the support of the work for the year fully met, and a small balance has been left to apply on the deficit with which the work of the preceding year was closed.

On this point your committee feels that a word of caution should be spoken.

The Church should not be allowed to lose sight of the fact that a deficit has not been avoided this year without great sacrifice on the part of the faithful missionaries on the field, and that our committee has had to turn away from many inviting doors of opportunity for lack of funds with which to carry the work forward in these places.

The Church must be carefully guarded against the erroneous impression that since this year was closed without debt, the contributions of the

year have been sufficient for meeting the Church's whole responsibility in the matter of Foreign Missions. There remains very much land yet to be possessed, and in many fields fertile soil awaits the sower, and ripening harvests will be lost unless the reapers come speedily to thrust in the sickle and bind the golden sheaves.

Our Church should keep constantly before the whole membership the position taken by our historic first General Assembly at Augusta, Ga., in 1861:

"The General Assembly desires distinctly and deliberately to inscribe on our Church's banner in immediate connection with the Headship of our Lord, his last command: 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,' regarding this as the great end of her organization and the indispensable condition of her Lord's promised presence."

Also, it seems to your committee that the missionary platform adopted by the General Assembly at Birmingham in 1907, in which we covenanted with God and with the other Protestant Christian denominations to give the gospel to 25,000,000 of our fellowmen in seven foreign lands, as our equitable share of the non-Christian world should be kept before our people until this task, conservatively estimated as costing \$1,000,000.00 per annum, be accomplished. This we believe will prevent any relaxation of effort on the part of our people that might result from a misunderstanding of the successful financing of our committee during the past year.

(3) The printed report shows that the total of contributions for this work from living donors during the past year has been larger than for any preceding year in our history, and that contributions of this class have been slowly but steadily rising for the past decade. This would seem to indicate a widening knowledge, a deepening interest and a rising tide of liberality that should cause us to thank God and take courage.

From other sources we have learned of at least one Presbytery in which every church within its bounds made an offering for Foreign Missions during the year. This admirable result was obtained through the splendid efforts of the Presbyterian chairman of Foreign Missions, who ascertained from the Nashville office the status of each church in this matter before the fall meeting of Presbytery, and at the meeting and afterward prosecuted a vigorous campaign through the use of the mails until every church in the Presbytery had made an offering.

The example of this Presbytery and its chairman of Presbytery's Committee of Foreign Missions is worthy of imitation.

Your committee presents the following recommendations:

(1) In view of the fact that the experiences of our own Executive Committee, as well as that of other agencies conducting Foreign Mission work shows that the undertaking of a definite task, such as the support of a station, the support of an individual missionary, or a definite share in some station or missionary by individuals, churches, societies and Sabbath schools exert a steadying influence upon the support of the work as a whole, we recommend that this method be followed by our churches and by the Executive Committee wherever possible.

(2) That General Assembly direct all churches that are not using the General Assembly's plan of church finance to present the cause of Foreign Missions to the congregation, and take special collections for this cause in the months of May and October.

(3) That, for the ecclesiastical year only, the first three weeks of February, and no longer period, be designated as a trial for special self-denial and free-will offerings for Foreign Missions in all the churches, which have not adopted the Assembly's financial plan, or which though having adopted it, are not securing their apportionments; and that all the churches be urged to observe this season as one of special prayer for God's blessing on this cause.

(4) That General Assembly express its appreciation of the valuable service rendered the cause of Foreign Missions by the Woman's Auxiliary, by the numerous societies throughout the Church, by the Sabbath schools, and by the Layman's Missionary Movement, and bid these organizations God-speed in their work.

(5) That the General Assembly heartily commend the work of the Education Department of the Executive Committee for the past year, and approve and recommend to the Sab-

bath schools for their hearty co-operation, the seven-year program of study, prayer and giving in the Sabbath schools as an excellent means of raising up a generation to succeed ours that shall know mission work and pray for it and give to it intelligently; and that the General Assembly express and record its appreciation of the faithful, efficient and unremunerated services of Miss Isabel Arnold in connection with our Executive Committee's educational work.

(6) That Rev. J. F. Cannon, Rev. W. L. Caldwell, W. G. Adams and C. A. Rowland be re-elected members of the Executive Committee for three years.

(7) That the action of the Executive Committee in its participation in the Congress on Religious Work in Latin America held at Panama be approved, and that the General Assembly express its cordial sympathy with the principle of interdenominational comity and co-operation in our Protestant Mission work in Latin America, which this Congress was intended to express and promote.

(8) That this Assembly reaffirm the action of the last Assembly in authorizing the Executive Committee to negotiate with the Mission Boards of other denominations working in Mexico with reference to readjustments in the Protestant mission work in that field, and to consummate according to its best judgment such arrangements as may promote the interests of the work in Mexico.

(9) That the Executive Committee be authorized to confer with other missionary agencies working in Cuba and especially with the Home Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., and to consummate any arrangement that in its best judgment would be conducive to economy and efficiency and to the best interests of the cause of missions in that field.

D. H. Rolston,
Chairman.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHURCH SOCIETIES.

I. The Committee on Church Societies present herewith a summary of the reports of the various Women's and Young People's Societies of the Church:

Women's Societies.

No. Societies reported. 2,678

Total Membership. 70,444

Contributions.

Foreign Missions. 110,479

Assembly's Home Missions. 24,680

Synod's Home Missions. 10,939

Presbytery's Home Missions. 21,955

Congregational Home Missions. 25,786

Christian Education & Ministerial Relief. 13,974

Sunday-school Extension and Publication. 2,950

Schools & Colleges. 12,016

Bible Cause. 1,038

Orphans' Homes. 26,833

Miscellaneous Benevolences. 44,690

Contributions not Benevolent. 42,695

439,847

After correcting a clerical error made last year in printing the item "Orphans' Homes" the following encouraging facts are noted:

Membership Increase. 2,801

Foreign Missions Increase. 4,909

Assembly Home Missions Increase. 3,017

Synodical Home Missions Increase. 732

Presbyterial Missions Decrease. 1,302

Congregational Missions Decrease. 6,371

Christian Education and Ministerial Relief Increase. 3,595

Sunday-school Extension Increase. 602

Schools and Colleges Increase. 1,109

Bible Cause. 384

Orphanages. 2,548

Miscellaneous Benevolence contributions not benevolence. 42,695

59,591

7,673

Net Increase. 51,918

(For statistics of Men's and Boys' Societies, and Young People's Societies, see report of Standing Committee on Publication and Sabbath-school work.)

II. There have come into the hands of your committee an overture from the Synod of Texas, re-